

Daily Bread: Hope – Matt Brydon – Jeremiah 32:26-41 – 06/08/17

Introduction

We all love a good story of hope – the lowest ranked team that climbs to the top, the unlikely love story...

Yet, what we love more is when all seems lost and in despair and THEN hope comes – We love the combination!

- Shawshank Redemption, “fear can hold you prisoner, hope can set you free.”

Today – see that **the destiny of our disobedience is met with God’s gracious rescue plan.**

Set the scene: Jeremiah locked in a prison, Jewish people trapped in Jerusalem, Babylonian army camped outside, God about to exile his people, so Jeremiah cries out to God one last time and God responds.

1. Hope in our redemption – *God says, “I will gather them back from the lands where I banish them.” (v37)*

God is about to give the people over to exile, seemed like he’d given up, yet he promises to gather them back!

God uses an example from v6-9 to show that he will redeem the people.

- Jeremiah buys back a field that is his, yet this field is where the Babylonian army are camped!
- Jeremiah has redeemed the land – like God promises to redeem his people through Jesus’s death.

Jeremiah put down a deposit on the field that he couldn’t yet possess to demonstrate that even though the people of Jerusalem were about to be exiled, God’s plan to redeem his people was always secure.

If you feel distant from God now – look to the finished work of Jesus on the cross – God’s plan is secure.

2. Hope in a renewed attitude – *“I’ll give them singleness of heart & action, so they will...fear me.” (v39)*

God promises to give his people singleness of heart & action – nice idea, but how do we live that way?

High standard – for everything you do to be motivated by love and fear of God.

Athletes manage to focus singly on their training & races though:

- Training day in, day out. Eating well day in, day out. Getting good sleep night in, night out.
- Race prep – dinner quantity & timing, breakfast quantity & timing, stretching, warm up, pre-race psyche...

For the years leading up to a major race – all is focused on that single race! No distractions or mixed priorities.

Q. What would happen if we viewed of faith with the same level of focus?

We must be ACTIVE in deepening our relationship with God – “*make every effort*”, “*fight the good fight*”, “*run...*”

Yet, God says, “*I will give them...*” (v39) We can’t stir ourselves up, it’s God’s promise and work by his Holy Spirit.

Q. Are you living a life that is open to God’s challenge, in order that you can grow more focused on him?

3. Hope in God’s goodness – *“everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them” (v40)*

God promises to do good to his people – most obviously, God did return his people to Jerusalem, 70 years later!

However, because it was 70 years before Jews returned, Jeremiah died in exile & never saw the promise fulfilled.

Even greater and bigger application of God’s promise to do good to his people:

- Jews were about to live as exiles & foreigners, NT describes us in the same way.
- Peter writes, “*...dear friends, I urge you as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires.*” (1 Peter 2)
- Peter wants to remind the people that they’re not just foreigners in the land, but also on this earth. Their true home is in heaven anyway. They were only ever passing through.

God’s greater promise to Jeremiah – he would settle them back in Jerusalem but also in His heavenly kingdom.

Conclusion

Shawshank Redemption – story of fear and darkness, which is ultimately dominated by hope.

These stories show us that we all desire a hero who is able to give us hope, in the midst of struggle. Someone to show us that even the darkest things in life can be defeated.

Jesus Christ gives us greatest hope – a real story, a real hero, defeated death & gives us complete assurance.

When struggles come, look to Jesus, the Saviour. There is no better hope to build your life upon – the promise of a home in heaven where, “we will be His people and He will be our God.”